

Slide 1



## Slide 2



### Welcome

**FWP Planning Team:**

**Doug Habermann**

- Region 5 Parks Manager, Billings

**Jenny Alexander**

- Cooney State Park Manager, Roberts

**Sue Dalbey**

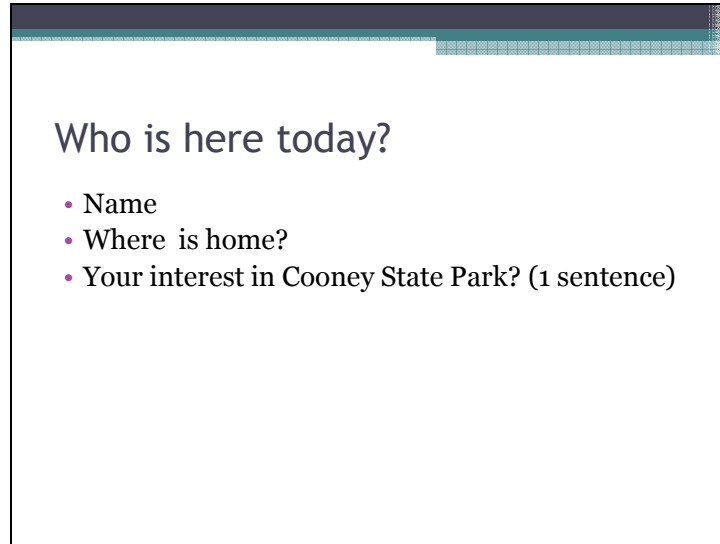
- State Parks Planner, Helena

Doug - Regional view & priorities

Jenny - Park perspective & operations

Sue – State level Parks representative– process direction

## Slide 3

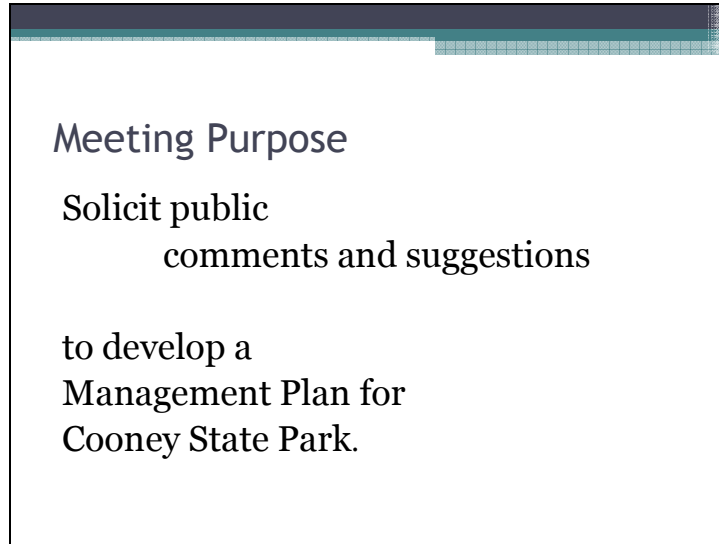
A presentation slide with a dark blue header bar and a light blue grid pattern on the right side. The main content area is white and contains the text 'Who is here today?' followed by a bulleted list of three items: 'Name', 'Where is home?', and 'Your interest in Cooney State Park? (1 sentence)'.

Who is here today?

- Name
- Where is home?
- Your interest in Cooney State Park? (1 sentence)

Introductions within small groups

Slide 4

A rectangular box with a black border containing the meeting purpose text. The top of the box features a decorative header bar with a dark blue gradient and a light blue grid pattern.

**Meeting Purpose**

Solicit public  
comments and suggestions

to develop a  
**Management Plan for  
Cooney State Park.**

PURPOSE, AGENDA, MSP BACKGROUND

## Additional Meeting Outcomes

- **Inform:**
  - Planning process
  - Park background
  - What's next


## House Keeping

- Cell Phones
- Bathrooms
- Refreshments
- No breaks scheduled in meeting

## Tonight's Agenda

- Planning Process
- Park Background
- Public Input – your action here!
- Next Steps
- Evaluate this meeting

## Slide 8



### Purpose of Management Plan

- Consider all the options
  - Public insight & opinion
- Give State Parks direction for next 10+ years
  - Goals
    - Objectives
    - Actions
- Prioritize efforts & funding
- Provide continuity over time
- Improves communication with the public

Often opens doors of communication between park staff, neighbors, users, individuals and groups to work together in the future.



Planning Process & Timeline	
• Summer 2010	Public Scoping
• Winter 2010	Management Plan drafted by State Parks Division
• Winter/Spring 2011	Draft Management Plan out for <u>Public Comment</u>
• Spring 2011	Final Decision and public notified

Public can comment at any time. Via web page or send a letter

#### DRAFT Plan

Planning Team will draft plan based on:  
public input here and forthcoming  
management experience  
Division priorities

Some public issues will not be up for debate, such as

- Fees
- Reservations
- Items that jeopardize visitor or staff safety
- Regulations governed by statute
- Fisheries or Wildlife resource management
- This plan = recreation mgmt.

Not all issues will be resolved in this plan – we don't know it all.

Will focus our efforts to tackle issues – ex. lake capacity, crowding

- complex issues that will take time to research
- does public perceive a problem? what are public expectations?
- options to improve safety
- consultation with other sites, ex. Lk Havasu, Yosemite, Cherry Ck Res
- what's needed? feasible with staff & funding?

Draft goes out for Public Comment – 30 days min  
press releases, web page posting, postcards

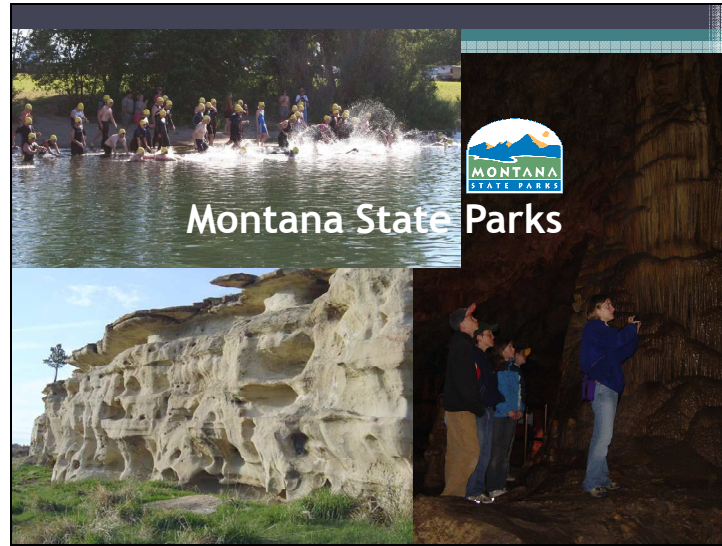
Draft may be modified based on comments

Final – approved by Parks Division Administrator – Chas Van Genderen

Public notified again

Implementation dependent upon future funding, environmental assessments, Division priorities, etc.

Slide 10



Key points

54 State Parks

Water-based

Cultural

Natural

Over 2 million visits/year (12% increase)

## Montana State Parks

### Mission Statement

Preserve, enhance and interpret  
a diverse representation of  
Montana's most outstanding  
natural, cultural/historic, and recreational  
resources  
for the personal, social, and economic benefit  
of present and future generations.

A presentation slide titled "Montana State Parks" with a decorative header bar. The slide lists five dedicated tasks in a bulleted format.

## Montana State Parks

- Dedicated to:
  - Serving Visitors
  - Visitor and Staff Safety
  - Caring for Resources
  - Educating & Interpreting our surroundings
  - Working with communities to build economy

Serve visitors

- provide & maintain access
- sanitation
- help when needed
- offices to conduct business, answer calls

Safety - maintain facilities

- sideboards for activities
- enforcement,
- protection from weather, conduct business

Educate – resources, laws, cultures

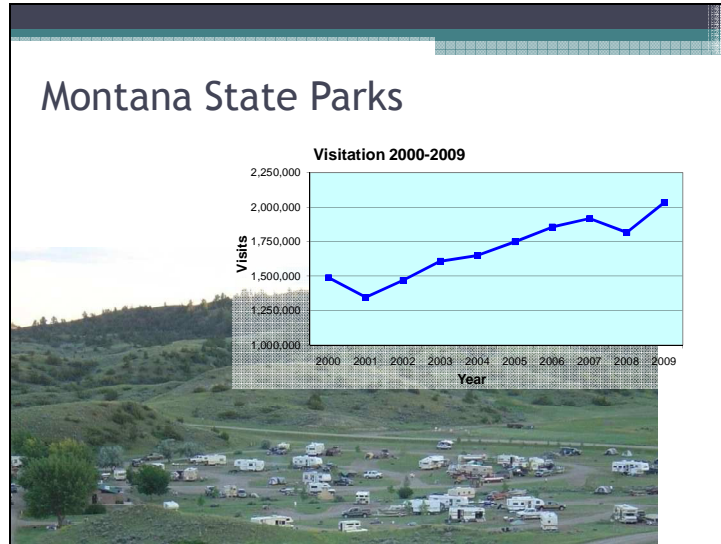
Economy – 2002 Economic Impact survey – being updated this year (2010)

2002 - \$179 mil spent across state by park visitors

Non res ave spending \$61/group/day – restaurants, gas, hotel

1,170 jobs created

Slide 13



Over 2 million visits/year (12% increase over 2009)

Map with regions and parks?

Visits – 83% residents (73% in 2004 – \$4 license plate fee initiated)

2006 – 1.85mil    2007 – 1.9 mil    2008 1.8 mil

Fees – Day use – free if arriving in MT vehicle

    \$5 non res vehicle

    Camping \$12-15 plus \$5 for electricity

## Montana State Parks

- **REGION 5** – Billings Area
- 6 Parks
  - Cooney, Lake Elmo
  - Yellowstone River, Prairie Dog Town
  - Chief Plenty Coups, Pictograph Cave
- 46 Fishing Access Sites



R5 = Nearly 400,000 visits

2<sup>nd</sup> highest # of visits in state – up 13% from 2008

83% residents; 4% overnight use

## Cooney State Park



- Created in 1936 for irrigation
  - Water: 28,230 acre-feet at full pool or 1078 surface acres at normal pool
- Designated State Park in 1969



- 309 acres owned by FWP or leased from DNRC.
- Water and dam are operated by the Rock Creek Water Users through an agreement with DNRC.
- FWP manages the 72 campsites 3 boat ramps, 6 day use areas, 12 latrines, comfort station, fish cleaning station, and facilities within the State Park.

Slide 17





Operations include: mowing costs, equipment maintenance, facility maintenance, septic services, utilities, garbage service, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, signs, fuel for road grader, tractor, and these are just a few of the items that are operation costs.

Positions include one full time park manager, full time park ranger, 2 seasonal maintenance positions, 1 seasonal park ranger position, and 1 groundskeeper/visitor services.

Revenue has increased the last two years because of installation of electrical pedestals.



## Recreational Opportunities

- Fishing - rainbow trout, walleye, cutthroats, crappie, and a few rouge perch.
- The Fisheries Bureau stocks the lake with rainbow trout and will be stocking it with cutthroat this fall.



## Services Offered

- Restrooms; vault and flush, shower building with coin machine.
- Garbage Service
- Fresh water
- Electrical hook-ups added in 2008 to Red lodge campground
- 72 campsites, 5 ADA sites, group use area, fish cleaning station
- Concessions on North Shore
- Boat ramps
- Interpretive programs

## Improvements Made

- Elevation of Marshall Cove Road, improved parking lot
- Additional campsites
- Playground
- Electrical hook ups
- Marshall Cove Boat Ramp extension
- Paving of North Shore Parking Lot
- Group Use Area
- Vendor

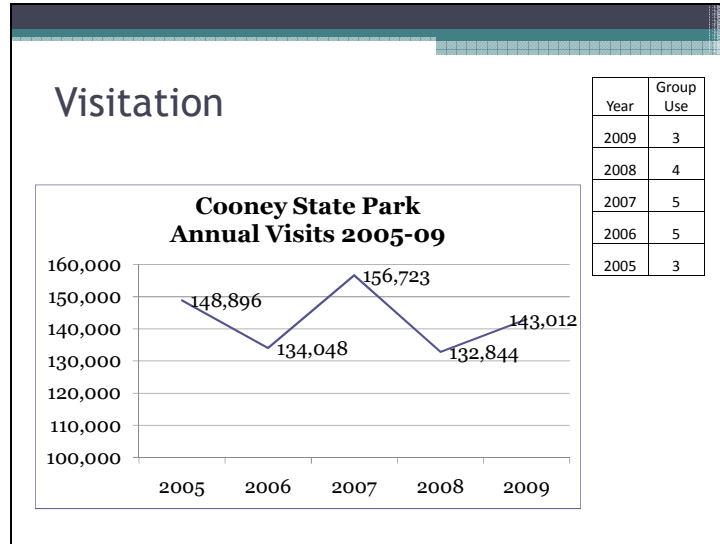
## Law Enforcement

- Cooperation of Parks Staff, Game Wardens, and Carbon County Sheriff
- Ex-Officio Park Staff: deal with day to day “smaller issues”
- Game Wardens: parks, fish, and water safety.
- County Sheriff: noise issues after quiet hours, DUI's, domestic disturbances, etc.

Discuss each group's responsibility and their authority

Contract with Sheriff





2008 dip due to visitation re-calculation after we conducted a visitation study for the summer. Cooney has 5 entrances, each with a vehicle counter, and many visitors use more than one entrance. We formulated a calculation that was less likely to double count visitors.

## Visitor Demographics

Trips Per Year	6
Average age	45
%MT Residents	95%
Main Activity	75% come to boat
Second Activity	50% come to camp
* Fishing is a large reason visitors come to Cooney as well.	

Source: 2006 Survey of Cooney Reservoir State Park Visitors, FWP

## Desired Improvements

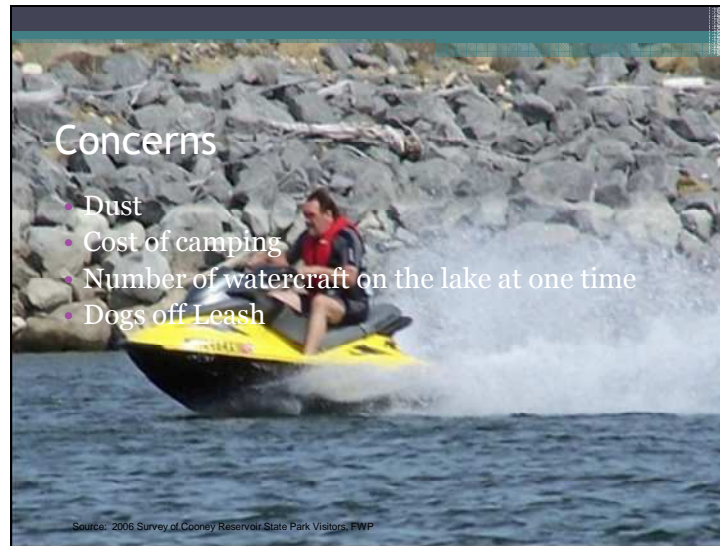
- Additional Camping sites
- Sites with electricity
- Group Use Area
- Better accessibility
- Concessions



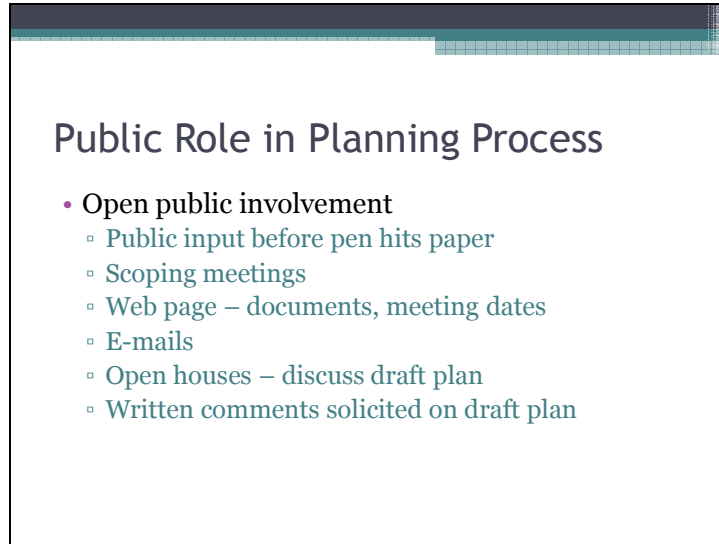
Source: 2006 Survey of Cooney Reservoir State Park Visitors, FWP

Addressed a number of these already: group use on North Shore, electrical hook ups in Red Lodge, vendor on North Shore.

## Slide 27



Working with county to expand dust control efforts.



**Public Role in Planning Process**

- Open public involvement
  - Public input before pen hits paper
  - Scoping meetings
  - Web page – documents, meeting dates
  - E-mails
  - Open houses – discuss draft plan
  - Written comments solicited on draft plan

We want to understand what the public wants as we move forward.  
Provide many chances for you to talk to us.

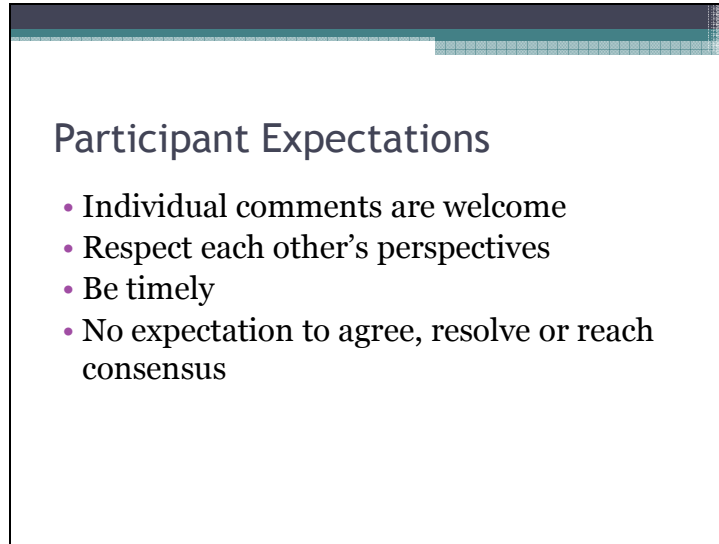
Doesn't mean all you ask for can be done.  
Remember we have 54 parks to tend, limited budgets, staff and resources.  
Analogy: 7 kids – all need attention, all want money; look for their strengths and ways to help meet their goals.

Environmental Assessment will be done for each major action within plan - resource & impacts analysis

EA provides more timely, accurate information for evaluation & public understanding

We want to

- serve visitors
- take care of the resources
- be good neighbors
- open doors for future cooperative efforts locally, regionally and statewide



### Participant Expectations

- Individual comments are welcome
- Respect each other's perspectives
- Be timely
- No expectation to agree, resolve or reach consensus

All visitors are not just like you or me

Old - young

Rich –poor

Experiences differ

Needs differ

Idea of fun differs

Example:

May not have a disabled vehicle sticker, but you may have a tough time walking from the car to the lake shore to fish

Example:

Camping = sleeping bag under the stars OR

Camping = motor home with generator to run microwave, tv, shower

We can't be everything to everybody, but we need to be able to understand what people want and explain why we make the decisions we move forward with.

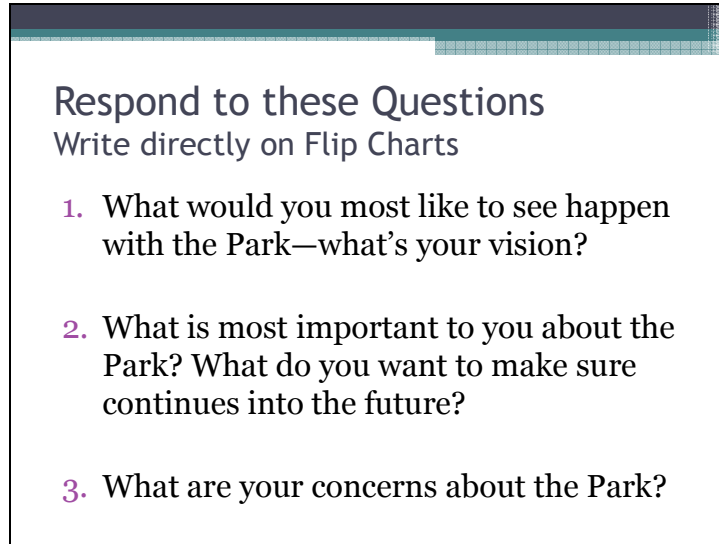
## Public Input in Small Groups

- Create self-managed groups.
- Discuss and respond to three questions
- Record responses directly on flipcharts.
- No need for consensus in your groups.  
All individual comments are welcome and desired.
- After all ideas are recorded, you will chose ideas most important to you.

## Public Input in Small Groups

- **Facilitator**
  - All members get to speak
  - Watch the time
- **Recorder**
  - Record all individual responses
  - Write large
  - Don't worry about spelling





**Respond to these Questions**  
Write directly on Flip Charts

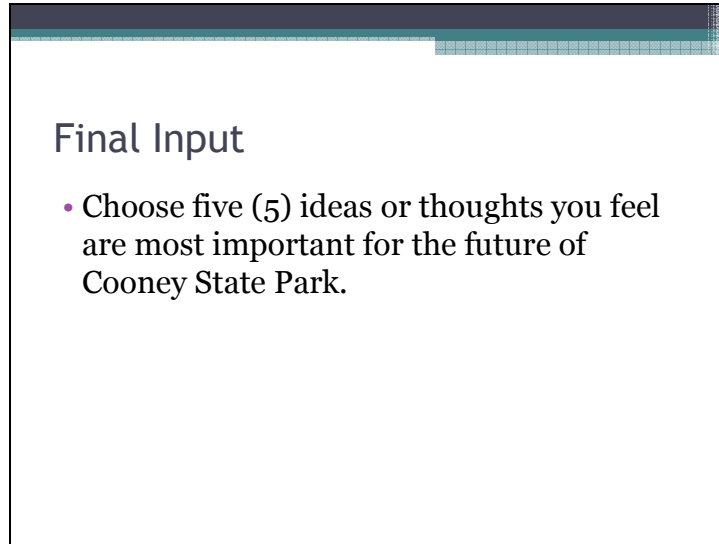
1. What would you most like to see happen with the Park—what's your vision?
2. What is most important to you about the Park? What do you want to make sure continues into the future?
3. What are your concerns about the Park?

30 minutes

10 minutes per question

Facilitators – make sure each person gets a chance to participate.

Recorders – Work to get everyone's idea on paper.



### Final Input

- Choose five (5) ideas or thoughts you feel are most important for the future of Cooney State Park.

Using a pen, mark five items most important to you.

## Next Steps

- All information recorded on flipcharts will be transcribed and put into a report format that will be available to all participants – web site.
- Meeting evaluation
- Write draft plan this winter
- Open Houses to discuss draft – early 2011
- Written comments solicited on draft plan
- Modify plan
- Final adopted

**Thank you for coming!**

Doug Habermann - Region 5 Parks Manager  
406-247-2954  
[dhabermann@mt.gov](mailto:dhabermann@mt.gov)

Jenny Alexander - Cooney State Park Manager  
406-445-2326  
[jalexander@mt.gov](mailto:jalexander@mt.gov)

Sue Dalbey - State Parks Planner  
406-228-3727  
[suedalbey@mt.gov](mailto:suedalbey@mt.gov)

**WEB SITE**  
[fwp.mt.gov/parks/management/cooney.html](http://fwp.mt.gov/parks/management/cooney.html)

THANK YOU FOR COMING – We appreciate your time.  
Could be with your families or recreating.  
Your thoughts will help in writing the draft.

Slide 36

